

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6189

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

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SUBJECT: REACTION TO DCA DEFERRAL REQUEST

1. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S REQUEST THAT CONGRESS DEFER CONSIDERATION OF THE U.S.-TURKISH DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT (DCA) PENDING AN ADMINISTRATION REVIEW OF POLICY MET WITH A GENERALLY BALANCED PUBLIC RESPONSE HERE.

A. PRIMIN DEMIREL STATED JANUARY 21 THAT, "THE NEW ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE ONLY YESTERDAY. NOT EVEN 24 HOURS HAVE ELAPSED YET. I HAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THE ACCURACY OF THESE PRESS REPORTS. LET THE NEW ADMINISTRATION GET DOWN TO WORK, THEN IT CAN TELL US IF IT HAS ANYTHING TO SAY." ASKED AGAIN FOR HIS OPINION ON JANUARY 23, DEMIREL REITERATED, "I THINK IT IS TOO EARLY TO COMMENT ON CARTER."

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B. FONMIN CAGLAYANGIL, IN AN INTERVIEW GIVEN TO ANKA NEWS SERVICE JANUARY 23, STATED HIS BELIEF THAT US POLICY TOWARD TURKEY WOULD NOT BE CHANGED BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. CAGLAYANGIL NOTED THAT THE NEW ADMINISTRATION CONTROLLED A MAJORITY IN CONGRESS AND WOULD BE ABLE TO RATIFY THE DCA. CAGLAYANGIL ASSESSED THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE REQUEST TO DEFER CONSIDERATION OF THE DCA NOT RPT NOT

AS A HANDICAP TO U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS, BUT RATHER AS A "REACTION BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION TO THE FORD ADMINISTRATION'S STANCE. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO GUESS WHAT THE U.S. WILL DO. IT IS ALSO IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO GUESS WHAT THE FATE OF TURKISH-AMERICAN DCA WILL BE. HOWEVER, WE CAN SAY THAT IF THIS AGREEMENT IS NOT RATIFIED, WHAT TURKEY WILL DO IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE...WE HAVE EXPRESSLY SAID THAT AS LONG AS THE DCA REMAINS UNRATIFIED, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REACTIVATE THE BILATERAL DEFENSE INSTALLATIONS".

C. MFA SPOKESMAN HASAN UNER STATED JANUARY 22 THAT THE DEFERRAL REQUEST "REFLECTS THE GENERAL ATTITUDE OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IN FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS IN A TRANSITIONAL PERIOD IN AMERICA."

2. TURKISH PRESS GAVE GENERALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD COVERAGE TO THE STORY, FOCUSING ON SEC. VANCE'S MEETING JAN. 21 WITH TURKISH AMBASSADOR ESENBEL AND THE LATTER'S SUBSEQUENT STATEMENT TO THE PRESS. MILLIYET'S ZEYYAT GOREN REPORTED FROM WASHINGTON THAT A DELEGATION MIGHT DEPART WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 3 TO VISIT GREECE, TURKEY AND CYPRUS. GOREN ALSO REPORTED THAT "AMERICAN OFFICIALS" HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE HANDLING OF THE DCA MATTER MIGHT HAVE ANGERED THE TURKS AND COULD RESULT IN THE DISMANTLING OF THE 26 U.S. INSTALLATIONS. JANUARY 23 CUMHURIYET ACCOUNT WAS MORE PESSIMISTIC, HEADLINING "CARTER ADMINISTRATION ACTION PROVOKES REACTION". THE ARTICLE REPORTED THAT, ACCORDING TO DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES, THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION PLANNED ON DELAYING CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION UNTIL AFTER THE TURKISH UNCLASSIFIED

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GENERAL ELECTION.

3. MOST EDITORIAL WRITERS IGNORED THE DCA RESUBMISSION ISSUE BUT THOSE THAT DEALT WITH IT WERE CRITICAL. GUNAYDIN'S TEOMAN EREL POKED GUN AT AMBASSADOR ESENBEL AND OTHER TURKISH LEADERS FOR TRYING TO PASS OFF THE DEFERRAL AS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT. CONCLUDED EREL, "AS LONG AS TURKEY IS UNABLE TO SHOW CONVINCINGLY THAT THERE IS ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE, IT WILL REMAIN SUBJECT TO THESE KINDS OF PRESSURE." CONSERVATIVE BAYRAK (JANUARY 24) CAME TO THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSION: "WE SHOULD WELL ACQUAINT OURSELVES WITH THE OVERT AND COVERT CENTERS OF POWER INFLUENCING THE U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND ADJUST OUR POLICY ACCORDINGLY." JANUARY 24 EXTREME LEFTIST VATAN WROTE, "NO ONE SHOULD HAVE ANY HOPE THAT U.S.-TURKISH RELATIONS WILL BE IMPROVED UNTIL THE (TURKISH) ELECTIONS NOR SHOULD ANYONE PLACE ANY HOPE IN CARTER, REGARDLESS OF THEIR OUTCOME."
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